

H.R.1973, The Senator Paul Simon Water for the Poor Act of 2005

Section by Section Summary

I. Short Title

Names the bill: “The Senator Paul Simon Water for the Poor Act of 2005”

II. Findings

Makes a series of findings on the state of access to water and sanitation, the impact of the global water crisis, international agreements on water and sanitation, and the role of water in conflict.

III. Statement of Policy

States the policy of the United States to:

- increase water assistance to high-priority countries,
- provide the right balance in forms of assistance to ensure affordability and equity for the very poor,
- provide the right balance in assistance to urban, periurban, and rural areas,
- ensure that the forms of assistance reflect the level of resources and the existence (or lack of existence) of water investment markets in the recipient country,
- support recipient country’s poverty-reduction strategies and urge the inclusion of water and sanitation in those strategies,
- promote country and local ownership of water and sanitation programs,
- promote community-based approaches and the involvement of civil-society,
- promote public-private alliances,
- promote policy reforms and capacity building in recipient countries,
- and protect the supply of clean water through environmental management.

IV. Sense of Congress

States the sense of Congress in support of:

- innovative international coordination mechanisms
- greatly increasing the amount of money going to water and sanitation assistance

V. Assistance to Provide Safe Water and Sanitation

Amends the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 to include a new section on water and sanitation. Purposes of assistance include:

- the goal of cutting in half the percentage of people without access to safe water and sanitation by 2015,
- focusing assistance where its needed most,
- promoting affordability and equity,
- promoting improved water efficiency,
- promoting innovative funding mechanisms,
- promoting private investment in a responsible fashion,

- and promoting recipient government capacity.

Activities supported include:

- the design, construction, maintenance, repair, upkeep, and operation of water and sanitation systems,
- improving the safety and reliability of water supplies, including environmental management,
- improving the capacity of recipient governments and local communities.

VI. Safe Water and Sanitation Strategy

Requires the Secretary of State to develop, and USAID to implement, a strategy to further the goals added by Section 5 that is consistent with the policy in Section

3. The strategy includes:

- an assessment of current US water and sanitation assistance programs,
- specific and measurable goals, benchmarks, and timetables,
- an assessment of the levels of funding needed,
- methods to better integrate water and sanitation into other US development objectives,
- methods to better coordinate US programs with other donors,
- an assessment of the policies of recipient governments in terms of water and sanitation,
- and the designation of high-priority counties.

VII. Monitoring Requirement

Requires the Secretary of State and the USAID Administer to monitor the assistance provided to ensure that it is making a difference and not being lost to corruption.

VIII. Development of Local Capacity

Sense of Congress in support of expanding efforts to train local officials and water & sanitation managers.

IX. Additional Water and Sanitation Programs

Sense of Congress in support of UN water and sanitation assistance programs and encouraging the inclusion of water and sanitation in the development efforts of the multilateral development banks.

X. Water for Peace and Security

Sense of Congress in support of efforts to develop watershed-wide mechanisms for governance and cooperation. Requests report on US programs to support such efforts.

XI. Authorization of Appropriations

Authorizes such sums as may be necessary to carry out the act.

